

Submitter: Ann Kendellen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure: HB3454

My name is Ann Kendellen and I am a constituent from House District 45 in NE Portland. I am a parent, grandparent, and retired reading specialist trained in the science of reading; specifically, the Orton Gillingham method. I worked with struggling readers in public and private schools for over twenty years. My students ranged from kindergartners to college-age. My college-level student was educated in a small Oregon public school district that did not diagnose her dyslexia nor teach her to read. She made it to college through sheer grit, intelligence, and a bit of guile while successfully covering the fact that she'd never read an entire book in her life.

We are facing a crisis across Oregon with our seriously low literacy scores. HB3198 and HB3454 provide a start to improving children's skills, but unfortunately only for those in districts willing to ask for help. I strongly urge you to strengthen these bills by amending them in the following ways:

? Provide dedicated funds to schools with the highest numbers of struggling readers, administered and directed by the Oregon Department of Education.

Ensure that instruction and tools provided are grounded in scientifically based research. A Governor-appointed task force could vet specific assessments, curricula, teacher training, and other resources. ?

Prioritize tutoring and teacher training. Intensive tutoring helps struggling readers immediately, while teacher training is a long-term investment in our educators that pays dividends for generations. Both should be prioritized in funding, vetted by the above task force, and coordinated by the Oregon Department of Education.

Early in my career I helped team teach literacy skills to a small group of Jefferson High School Students. All were years behind. I will not forget a senior crying out in frustration, "Why didn't anyone teach me this before?" Let's take this opportunity to make sure no students ever ask that question again.